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Student and Parent

# HANDBOOK





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ST. CROIX LUTHERAN  
ACADEMY

Student and Parent

# **HANDBOOK**

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## MISSION

Educating the total student – spiritually, intellectually, and physically – in a caring, Christian family community.

## PURPOSE

St. Croix Lutheran Academy is a Christ-centered educational ministry sharing the message of God's love with all students. We carry out our purpose by pointing students to the truths of God's Word in the Bible, by helping students strengthen their relationship with their Savior Jesus, and by sharing the good news of his love for all with those who do not yet know him as their personal Savior.

## CORE VALUES

### Biblical World View

We believe that the Bible is God's unchanging truth, the foundation for all learning and life, and the message of God's saving grace for all.

### College Preparation

We challenge and support students and staff to develop and utilize their God-given gifts to become productive leaders in the school, church, and local/international community.

### Excellence

We pursue excellence in all aspects of Christian education- academics, athletics, and the arts- to the glory of God.

### Global

We embrace the culturally diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and gifts of individuals to enrich excellence and to enable one's personal ministry.

### Student Focused

We recognize all students are unique, and we strive to put their needs first, as we help them develop spiritually, academically, physically, socially, and emotionally.



## BACKGROUND CHECKS

### Notification to St. Croix Lutheran Academy Parents

The State of Minnesota, in Statute 123B.03, requires that criminal history background checks be conducted for all employees of a school. St. Croix Lutheran Academy complies with this statute. All employees as well as regular volunteers who are in contact with students during the school day (i.e., library assistants), are subject to criminal history background checks by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension or the Federal Bureau of Investigation (for non-state residents). Failure to comply with the background check could result in termination of employment, or employment may be withdrawn due to the results of the background check.

## BOARD OF GOVERNANCE

St. Croix Lutheran Academy is owned and operated by an association of Wisconsin Lutheran Synod and Evangelical Lutheran Synod congregations in the Twin Cities area. The pastor(s), teacher(s), and at least two lay delegates from each of these congregations make up the school's governing body, the **General Board**.

The General Board elects the **Board of Regents**, the executive group that carries out the policies determined by the General Board. Matters and questions relating to these boards should be directed to the SCLA leadership or to pastor, teacher, or lay delegates.

## TUITION

Expenses for students are kept at a minimum. A non-refundable enrollment fee must be paid. Each student will be charged tuition annually, and additional fees may be charged to cover expenses not included in tuition.

St. Croix Lutheran Academy's policy is that tuition be paid in a timely manner. All families are required to enroll in automatic payments using ACH withdrawal, unless payment is made in full by the end of August for the current school year.

All tuition is to be paid using one of four methods:

### *Annual Payment*

Total tuition must be paid before school begins.

### *Semester Payment Plan*

The first payment is due in August and the second payment is due in January.

### *Nine-Month Plan*

The first payment is due in September, and the last payment is due in May.

### *Eleven-Month Plan*

The first payment is due in July, and the last payment is due in May.

1. Tuition will be prorated for any late enrollments or withdrawals. Enrollment for any portion of a month will be charged the full month's tuition rate.
2. Dormitory Fees will be charged on a semester basis. Students wishing to move out of the dormitory at semester break need to make arrangements with the dorm director two months prior to the planned move.
3. Part time PSEO students will be charged the full annual SCLA tuition rate. Full time PSEO students will be charged a per course fee for SCLA courses.

## Penalties for Delinquent Accounts

### *Non-payment or Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF)*

A \$40.00 follow-up service fee is assessed for all missed payments. An additional \$30.00 fee will be assessed for all returned payments, i.e. non-sufficient funds, account closed. These charges apply regardless of the payment plan chosen.

### *Enrollment Denied*

Students whose accounts are delinquent by more than one semester or who have not worked out a payment plan will not be re-enrolled for the next school year. If payments have not been received by the end of the first semester, a student may be denied continued enrollment for the current school year.

### *Graduation*

Diplomas and transcripts are issued when all tuition and fees are paid in full.

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

It is the aim of the St. Croix Lutheran Academy Association that all students who are accepted can attend without concern of financial hardship. SCLA's tuition assistance program will help those who cannot meet the costs of tuition on their own. Those who request such assistance are asked to complete an application with an independent financial aid company designated by the school. Assistance awards are made in coordination with the amount of funds available and the level of need identified. The application deadline for financial aid is **March 15**.

SCLA also offers several scholarship opportunities for full-time students. Each scholarship requires a separate application form to be completed and returned to the school office by March 15. Application forms are available in the school office or are downloadable from [StCroixLutheran.org](http://StCroixLutheran.org). These scholarships are part of a student's financial aid package.

## PEST CONTROL MATERIALS AND USAGE ON CAMPUS

St. Croix Lutheran Academy utilizes a licensed, professional pest control service firm for the prevention and control of rodents, insects, and other pests in and around the school buildings. Their program consists of:

1. Inspection and monitoring to determine whether pests are present and whether any treatment is needed
2. Recommendations for maintenance and sanitation to help eliminate pests without the need for pest control materials
3. Utilization of non-chemical measures such as traps, caulking, and screening
4. Application of EPA-registered pest control materials when needed

Pests can sting, bite, cause contamination, damage property, and spread disease; therefore, we must prevent and control them. The long-term health effects on children from the application of such pest control materials, or the class of materials to which they belong, may not be fully understood. All pest control materials are chosen and applied according to label directions per federal law.

An estimated schedule of interior pest control inspections and possible treatments is available for review or copying in the school office. A similar estimated schedule is available

for application of herbicides and other materials to school grounds. Parents of students may request to receive, at their expense, prior notification of any application of a pest control material, should such an application be deemed necessary on a day different from the days specified in the schedule.

(Prepared by the Minnesota Pest Control Association for the "Parents Right to Know Act", [M.S. 123B.575, Subdivisions 1-14])

## TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

St. Croix Lutheran Academy students come to campus by a variety of means. Students drive from all areas of the Twin Cities and many will take riders. Students who drive automobiles to and from SCLA must remember that this is a privilege that may be revoked if abused or if it results in danger to the operator, other students and staff, or damage to property. SCLA takes no responsibility for riders in cars driven by students to and from school. Parents are encouraged to check carefully the driving habits of students with whom their children are riding. All cars that are parked on the property of SCLA must be registered in the office and identified by a permit placed in the upper or lower left-hand corner of the windshield. SCLA operates transportation routes. Inquire with the principal for more information.

# ACADEMICS

## ACADEMIC FRAUD

It is anticipated that all students will be honest and use their God-given abilities to their fullest measure during the learning process. However, sometimes students are tempted for a variety of reasons to resort to dishonest methods and commit academic fraud.

Academic fraud includes the following:

- Handing in any work that is not 100% their own.
- Copying an assignment, worksheet answers, or a paper directly from another student (either with or without that student's permission) and handing it in.
- Copying or using another student's quiz or test answers, copying answers from notes or a book onto a "cheat sheet" or body part, using technology, etc., and using those answers without instructor permission when taking a quiz or test.
- Using a translator, artificial intelligence (AI), or any form of technology without instructor permission.
- Students who provide answers, work, or research to other students in any form without the teacher's previously acquired consent, also commit academic fraud and are subject to discipline.
- Anytime a student submits unoriginal research material without crediting the source, they have committed plagiarism. This includes the following:
  - Copying information word for word from a print source (book, magazine, etc.) or an internet source and handing it in without citing the original source.
  - Paraphrasing information from a print source or internet source and handing it in without citing the original source.
  - Cutting and pasting from several internet sources to write a paper that is supposed to be the student's own work.
  - Taking an article directly off the Internet or from a print source and handing it in.

### Academic Fraud Clarified:

- A student is not plagiarizing when copying notes, work, or answers that are part of a teacher-directed team or group collaborative/cooperative learning experience.
- A student is not plagiarizing when they have the teacher's previously acquired consent to copy another student's notes, work, or answers.

### Academic Fraud results in a penalty:

Cases of academic fraud will be brought to the attention of the Academic Dean and/or Principal. The penalties will be handled on a case-by-case basis, but may include loss of credit for the assignment, loss of credit for the course, suspension, and in extreme cases, possible expulsion.

# ATTENDANCE

## School Day

Under normal circumstances, the school doors will open at 6:30 a.m. Students should not arrive on campus before that time. The first class period begins at 7:55 a.m. Students who arrive early are expected to spend time in constructive preparation for the day. The school day ends at 3:10 p.m. All students who do not have a valid reason for remaining after this time are asked to be out of the building as soon as possible. The hallways are closed and locked at 3:30. Students waiting for rides are asked to wait in the commons, the atrium, or outside the building.

## Attendance

As faithful stewards of time, students will attend school regularly. Minnesota Statute 120A.22 states, "Every child between seven and 17 years of age must receive instruction." Students who attend classes daily increase their chances of success in their academic studies. Students are expected to attend class to receive credit for courses. Students may not exceed nine (9) absences/class/semester.

## Enforcement

High school: Students who exceed nine (9) absences/class/semester will not receive credit for the class.

Middle School: Students who exceed nine (9) absences/class/semester will not be allowed to participate in the end-of-year trip.

An attendance report will be run at the end of every month. Families with students close to or exceeding the absence threshold will be contacted via email by the Dean of Student Life. It is the responsibility of the family to keep track of total absences/semester.

A family has the right of appeal if unusual circumstances result in excessive absences. If the appeal is granted, the student will receive credit but will not be eligible for academic awards.

What is NOT excluded from this policy:

- Absences due to vacations
- Absences due to non-documented illness or medical appointments
- Absences due to non-school-sanctioned activities (e.g., college visits, work shadowing, club sports)
- Absences due to weather if school is still in session

What IS excluded from this policy:

- Absences due to attendance at a funeral
- Absences due to documented illnesses or medical appointments

\*It is good practice for parents to share medical documentation immediately with SCLA so that we have it in our records.

If a student must be absent for any reason, a parent/guardian must call the school at (651) 455-1521 before 9:00 a.m. that day to notify the school of the student's absence. If a parent does not call the school, the attendance staff will attempt to call the parent at home or work.

Whenever a student arrives at school after the first class has begun or leaves school before the end of the last class, he/she must check in or out in the school office.

## *Tardiness*

Punctual attendance to each class is an important responsibility of every SCLA student. Being “tardy” is not being present in the classroom and ready to begin class when the bell rings.

### **Tardy to school in the morning**

Students who arrive after 7:55 a.m. must check in at the school office to obtain a pass to class. SCLA will allow a student to be tardy to school four (4) times each semester without penalty. The Dean of Student Life will assign the following penalties to repeat offenders:

- 1 – 4 tardies per semester- warning
- 5 – 6 tardies per semester- 30-minute after-school detention
- 7 – 9 tardies per semester- 60-minute after-school detention
- 10 or more tardies per semester- 60-minute special detention

### **Tardy to sets 2-8**

- 1 – 2 tardies per semester- warning
- 3 tardies per semester- 30-minute after-school detention
- 4 tardies per semester- 60-minute after-school detention
- 5 or more tardies per semester- two 60-minute special detention

### **Tardy to class**

After first hour, individual instructors will assume responsibility for all tardy students who are without a hall pass.

## *Unexpected Absence*

Unexpected absences include student illness, bad weather, emergencies, etc. A parent should call the school before 9:00 a.m. to report the absence. If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she should report to the school office. Attendance staff will contact a parent to pick up the student or obtain permission to leave school.

## *Planned 1- or 2-Day Absence*

A parent may request that a student be excused for a planned absence, such as attending a wedding, funeral, visiting a college, etc. The attendance staff should be notified by a parent/guardian at least one day before a planned absence. The note should state the specific reason for the absence.

## *Brief Absence/Appointments*

A parent may request that a student be absent from school for a short period of time, i.e., a doctor or dentist appointment. Whenever possible, appointments should be scheduled before or after school hours. **The school year includes many long weekends and extended breaks; parents are encouraged to consider this in their planning.** Parents should send a note stating the date, departure time, and the reason for the absence. The attendance staff will issue a permission pass to the student upon receiving an excuse note. This pass is to be signed by the classroom instructor at the time of departure, and the student must bring the signed pass to the school office to check out before leaving the building.

The parent or student needs to provide verification of the appointment to the school office. The professional provider’s office will have a form they complete reflecting the date, time, and nature of the appointment. If verification is not submitted, the student is not eligible to participate in after-school activities that day.

## *Multiple-Days Absence*

SCLA strongly discourages multiple days of absence for reasons other than illness or emergency since it may impair the student's academic and social progress. To obtain permission for a multiple-days absence, parents/guardians must submit a request to SCLA at least one week before the first day of the absence explaining the occasion and purpose of the absence. Although we encourage families to take vacations during scheduled school breaks, we understand that some families may need to take a vacation during times of the school year when classes are in session. **The school year includes many long weekends and extended breaks; parents are encouraged to consider this in their planning.**

Under this scenario, teachers are NOT responsible for the following:

1. Getting assignments to students ahead of time.
2. Re-teaching the lessons the student missed while on vacation.

If there will be a major presentation, test, or project missed, it is the responsibility of the student to plan with the teacher before the absence.

## *Unexcused Absence*

Unexcused absences include skipping class, sleeping in, and absences not excused by a parent or guardian. A student who has an unexcused absence will be assigned a 60-minute detention for each class period missed. Unexcused absences will be noted as such on the student's record. After three (3) such absences, parents will meet with the Dean of Student Life to address the problem.

## *Required Days*

Attendance on the last two days of each semester is required.

## BOOKS

The school furnishes textbooks for each course. Excessive wear, abuse, or loss of textbooks will result in a \$100 charge unless the book costs more than \$100.

Each student should have a Bible. Bibles may be purchased from a third-party source or through the religion department. The religion department does not require a specific version, however, the New International Version (NIV) is used by most students.

## COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

The Director of Guidance serves as a resource person for class advisors and as a personal counselor to students. Counseling is done both formally and informally for issues such as school life and interpersonal relationships. While spiritual counseling is primarily the function of the student's own pastor, such counseling is also done, especially as it affects school life and relationships. Every instructor at SCLA is a called minister of the gospel and as such serves also as a counselor. Students are encouraged to seek out an instructor with whom they feel comfortable speaking.

Homeroom advisors serve as primary counselors for each student and offer guidance for course selection appropriate for a student's career interests. The Guidance Office provides students and parents with information in such areas as report cards, credits, GPA, course credit recovery, transcripts, and testing programs. The Guidance Office will

provide students with college and career information. Materials relating to colleges and other career directions and opportunities are in a special section of the library media center. Catalogs for schools and colleges may be found in the library or obtained from the Guidance Office. Students are encouraged to develop a personal file at home to save all related information.

## CUMULATIVE RECORDS

Due to state record-keeping requirements and because schools, colleges, and prospective employers require specific student information, a cumulative file is kept for each student in attendance at SCLA. This record includes biographical information, academic achievement record, test scores, attendance record, and health profiles.

The cumulative file is considered confidential in nature and will not be released to any agency unless both student and parent/guardian sign a release. The student alone may sign if he/she is 18 or older. Most schools, colleges, and prospective employers have release forms. If none are available, forms may be obtained from the guidance office.

According to Minnesota state law, any student, by giving ample prior notice, may request to see his school file and request clarification or correction of any information. The school is granted the right to honor this request at a time convenient for school officials. Such requests are to be made ONLY through the registrar.

## ELIGIBILITY AND INCOMPLETE WORK

The process of learning is very effective when the student's knowledge and skills are current with the expectations of the course. In order for the student to be as successful as possible, structures are in place to assist the student in being faithful with their school work.

### Academic Detention

All assignments are expected to be completed on the due date set by the teacher. Academic Detention may be issued to students who have not turned in assignments on time. The instructor determines when to classify work as "missing." A Missing Work Report is run every week based on assignments turned in by 4pm on Thursday. Students and guardians will be notified via email at least 24 hours in advance of an academic detention.

Academic detention requires mandatory attendance and takes priority over co-curricular activities, employment, or transportation arrangements. If a student does not show up for a required after-school academic detention, it becomes a behavioral detention, is documented, and is subject to disciplinary action.

### Past Due Assignments (Cut-Off)

Any students with incomplete assignments that are more than 2 weeks old at the time the report is run will be required to attend academic detention the following school day until the student has zero total missing assignments. Even one past due assignment can trigger academic detention and it takes priority over co-curricular activities. Students in this situation are NOT ineligible.

### Co-curricular Eligibility

6th to 10th-grade students who have more than 6 missing assignments at the time of the report will be considered ineligible for the following week starting on Monday. Parents and students will be notified by email the day the report is run if their student is



ineligible for the following week. Ineligible students will not be allowed to participate in any co-curricular activity including athletics, fine arts, or student clubs/groups. Students who are enrolled in choir or band for credit are eligible to perform when the choir or band performs as a unit.

Once ineligible, the student is required to serve academic detention each day until work is current and there are zero missing assignments. When the student is complete with all coursework (verified by their teachers and the Academic Dean), the student may practice or meet with their co-curricular group during the remaining ineligible period, but not participate in contests or performances. They may regain full eligibility with the following week's report. Students who are declared ineligible multiple times within a season may be removed from the co-curricular activity. Students may be declared ineligible at any time based on other factors such as behavior, ability to positively represent St. Croix, or academic performance at the discretion of the administration.

Junior/Senior Opt-in: Junior and Senior students may choose to opt-in to the eligibility policy. Contact the Academic Dean for details.

## Classroom-Level Late Work Policy

Note: All the aspects of the school eligibility and late work policy still apply. This policy will be enforced by individual teachers and is in addition to the school-level policy.

It is the expectation that students are faithful in turning in all assignments on time. After the second time in the semester that a student turns in an assignment late in a class, the teacher will issue the student academic detention each time an assignment is late.

The student may avoid academic detention if they ask for an extension from the teacher prior to the due date. The student must explain the reason the assignment is late and when the assignment will be completed. The student may ask for an extension by email, chat, or face-to-face.

## GRADING SYSTEM

Final grades are assigned for all credit courses at the end of each semester. They are measures of student achievement as indicated by class performance and examinations.

The following letter grading system is used:

- A Superior work and performance
- B Above Average
- C Average
- D Below Average
- E Special grade to indicate effort was made to meet minimum requirements established for a particular course and student. Successful completion of the course means credit is given toward graduation requirements, with notation regarding this grade attached to transcripts.
- F Failure to complete course satisfactorily, no credit given.

One-half (1/2) credit will be given for each semester in which a student successfully completes the work in a course.

Letter grades are given a numerical equivalent for ranking, grade point average (GPA), etc. Position or placement is determined by an average of grade points earned for each semester.

Grades are available to students and parents through the online gradebook. These grades are not final grades but only indicators of the student's progress to that point. They are cumulative, determining the final grade at the end of each semester.

Making up courses failed at SCLA is the responsibility of the student. Such courses may be made up at SCLA during the regular academic year or at other schools offering acceptable course-work and granting high school credit during the summer, during evening hours, or through online courses. Arrangements for enrolling in such courses are the responsibility of the student. However, enrollment in these courses should be checked with the Academic Dean to see that the courses fulfill the credit requirements of SCLA.

## GRADUATION

### Requirements

In addition to the Minnesota state requirement for graduation, students attending SCLA are required to take a religion course during each semester in attendance. See the current course catalog for up-to-date requirements and course offerings.

A student must be a full-time student in each semester to graduate. One full credit is given for successful completion of each class that meets daily for both semesters.

### Graduation Service

The date of graduation is listed on the school calendar. A rehearsal for the graduation ceremonies is held preceding the graduation, and all seniors are required to attend. Commencement exercises are a service conducted by SCLA for the graduating seniors; therefore, final decisions as to speakers, liturgists, music, and the general format of the commencement are made by the administration of the school. Caps and gowns are required for the service and are provided free of charge.

To participate in the graduation service, the student must successfully complete the required number of credits for graduation or be less than one semester's credits short of the required total for graduation. Likewise, the student's tuition account must be current, or their prepayment plan must be current, in order for the student to participate in the graduation service. The senior class and faculty will choose a member of their class as the student who will represent them as their class speaker at the graduation service.

### Recognition of Scholastic Achievement

Seniors who are academically eligible will receive Latin-level honors at graduation if the following are achieved:

- Cum Laude: 3.8+ with no AP/Dual Credit classes

- Magna Cum Laude: 3.9+ with 1-6 AP/Dual Credit classes

- Summa Cum Laude: 3.9+ with 7 or more AP/Dual Credit classes

## LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The Library Media Center is an important resource area where students can work independently and enjoy academic materials. The library media center is open during regular class hours, 30 minutes before school starts and 30 minutes after school is dismissed.

## SCHEDULE AND COURSE CHANGES

Procedures for course changes are under the direction of the Academic Dean. Course changes will be reserved for proper academic placement.

## SCHOOL LETTERS

### Academic Lettering

Academic letters are awarded in May of each year at the academic awards program to students who have met the following requirements:

#### Grade Point Average

All academically eligible students: At least one semester of grades to review – Cumulative GPA of at least 3.670

## SERVICE LEARNING

In God's Word, the Bible, there are lessons and parables of Jesus demonstrating humble service to others. As SCLA encourages students to follow his example and act as servant leaders, opportunities are sought out in the church, school, and community. Volunteer service hours are granted for services done voluntarily outside the home and not for financial gain. Guidelines for approved service projects are available from the Guidance Office.

**Students are not required to have service hours;** however, many colleges and universities look at student volunteerism and service hours in considering applications. SCLA encourages students to obtain service hours and provides a place on school transcripts that lists service credit time.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

Students will take various local and national tests to determine their abilities, achievements, and interests. The results of these tests help advisors and teachers guide each student in selecting appropriate courses of study and career or college options. The results also aid faculty and administration in determining the success of instruction and areas that need improvement.

## STUDY HALLS

Study hall is an ideal place to practice stewardship of time. Students are expected to keep busy at homework, to be quiet, and not to waste either their time or the time of others. All classroom rules apply to study halls.

St. Croix Lutheran Academy is committed to providing a college prep curriculum. Therefore, the maximum number of study halls is one per student. All exceptions must be approved by the Principal and Academic Dean.

## TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts may be requested through the Guidance Office. Transcripts sent out prior to graduation are free of charge to students. There is also no charge for the first transcript issued following graduation. Subsequent transcripts will be sent for a fee. Transcripts are issued ONLY through the guidance office. No transcripts or records will be sent for any graduate whose accounts are not paid in full or who has other outstanding commitments, such as missing textbooks.

## VIRTUAL SCHOOL DAY

The goal of the Virtual School Day is for students to continue the momentum of learning already established in the classroom. A day of school that is designated a Virtual School Day will be communicated to students and parents as part of the school cancellation notice. A Virtual School Day will be instituted at the discretion of the administration.

- SCLA teachers will utilize Google Classroom for a Virtual School Day. A learning activity will be posted in Google Classroom for every class.
- Lessons will be posted by 9:00 a.m. on a Virtual School Day. Teachers may begin posting assignments following the announcement of school cancellation.
- The assignment should be submitted to Google Classroom by the students at some point on the Virtual School Day date in order for attendance to be verified.
- Students should expect a learning activity that is 20-30 minutes in length for each class.
- Students who do not submit the assigned learning documentation will be marked absent for that class period. However the tasks are still required and the student will have to complete them.
- Teachers will “be present” online during communicated times to answer any student questions in a timely manner.

# CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

## CO-CURRICULAR LETTERING

A letter is awarded to students who have met the requirements established for each individual activity and have remained eligible for the duration of the activity. These requirements may be obtained from the coach/advisor of each activity. This letter award is a "SC" which is to be worn only on a school letter jacket.

## STUDENT ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES

A formal and extensive activity program has been developed at SCLA and is supervised by faculty members to provide a variety of interesting and valuable experiences for students. Students are encouraged to participate in these activities as part of school life. Awards may be given in some activities to students who have distinguished themselves in some way. These awards may include a school letter.

### Conference

St. Croix Lutheran Academy is a member of the Skyline Conference, (conference activities also include fine arts) which includes private and public schools in the area. The school is also a member of the Minnesota State High School League and participates in a variety of interscholastic activities. Skyline Conference sports presently are on a C team (may include grades 7-8), junior varsity, and varsity level for boys and girls.

### Participation

Interscholastic athletics is a privilege for every eligible student. It is also a responsibility, because the student is a member of a team that represents the school both on and off the playing field. The coaches have the right to cut or add members to any team, to promote or demote any team members at any time. The coaches alone have the responsibility for choosing the participants in every athletic contest. SCLA's eligibility guidelines are in addition to those established by the Minnesota State High School League. (See 'Eligibility Guidelines' for details.) Students must complete the MSHSL eligibility form each year. Students participating in contact and limited contact sports must complete a baseline concussion test every two years.

Students who miss classes due to illness or who have an unexcused absence will not be permitted to participate in any extra-curricular activity, including practice, on the day of the absence.

### Sports Physicals

In keeping with the requirement established by the Minnesota State High School League, St. Croix Lutheran Academy has established the following policy: All students participating in any sport listed below are required to have a current sports physical exam on file in the school office before practice for such sport begins. Physicals are current for three years from the date of exam. **Students may neither practice nor participate in interscholastic sports until a current physical form is on file in the school office.**

# STUDENT LIFE

## AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

- Hallways are to be cleared following the bell at 3:30 pm. Students are encouraged to leave campus by 3:45 each day if there is no sanctioned after-school event
- If there is a sanctioned after-school event, students are encouraged to leave campus no later than 30 minutes after the last activity ends
- Students waiting for an event must treat this time as a privilege and not an obligation on the part of the school; abuse of this privilege will result in possible disciplinary action

## CELL PHONES

Cell phones must be kept in student lockers during the instructional day. SCLA is not responsible for broken, lost, or stolen cell phones.

### Rationale

1. The main purpose of school is to learn. Having cell phones regularly available is a distraction to the learning process.
2. Students will have more opportunities to engage in face-to-face conversations with fellow students, teachers, and staff.
3. Students will be less likely to engage in inappropriate media behavior during school hours.
4. Faculty and staff will encourage more positive social interactions among students
5. Existing studies provide evidence that allowing phones in the classroom negatively impacts test scores and long-term learning retention. Research has shown that cell phones distract and negatively impact reaction times, performance, enjoyment of focal tasks, and cognitive capacity (Dylan Dukes, Ph.D.).

### Enforcement

1. Students may use their cell phones at their lockers during passing times.
2. Students may use their devices during advisory, free times (e.g., Free Friday), and lunch.
3. Students may not have cell phones or Bluetooth headphones/earbuds during chapel worship.
4. If a student violates the policy...
  - a. The phone will immediately be confiscated for the day and placed in the front office (either the teacher will take it to the office or will escort the student there)
    - i. Parents/guardians will be notified by the front office
  - b. A parent or guardian must pick up the phone from the front office
    - i. If the student lives in the dorm, his/her immediate supervisor must pick it up from the front office
    - ii. If a student's parent/guardian cannot pick up the phone, it may be released with verbal or written parental permission (phone or email)

- c. If a student exceeds three infractions, they must turn their phone into the front office upon entry and may pick it up at the end of each school day. This will be in effect for two school weeks.

## Exclusions/Exceptions

1. Student 1:1 device used for classroom purposes
2. Smartwatches and Bluetooth headphones/earbuds are allowed for timekeeping and learning purposes
3. When required by a teacher for a specific learning activity
4. Those with medical exemptions (doctor's note must be provided)

## CHAPEL DEVOTIONS

Chapel and devotions are part of the daily life of the SCLA family and an important part of SCLA's mission and core values. Attendance at chapel and other devotions is mandatory.

## CLOSED CAMPUS

SCLA is a closed campus. Once students arrive on campus on a school day, they may not, under normal circumstances, leave the school again before the designated closing time without special permission from the Dean of Student Life or Principal or written permission from a parent/guardian.

SCLA seeks to maintain an environment that is safe for students and welcoming for parents and visitors. Student behavior before and after school must support this goal. Former students and out-of-school friends who loiter around the school before, during, and after school will be asked to leave.

Students/parents should not order anything from outside vendors to be delivered during the school day, i.e., food from Ubereats, Grubhub, DoorDash, etc. This is a safety concern that also disrupts the educational process within our community.

## CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

No school employee or person employed by the school may use corporal punishment on a student; however, school personnel may use reasonable force to maintain safety for others or in self-defense.

## DETENTION AND REVOCATION OF PRIVILEGES

Instructors and other designated personnel may issue detention to students for breaking school policies. An instructor or staff member will inform the Dean of Student Life of the infraction. Any detentions enforced will be served after school or as determined by the Dean of Student Life.

### Detention Implementation

1. The Dean of Student Life will schedule all detentions. Detentions begin promptly at 3:15 pm. Skipped detentions will result in the detention time being doubled and rescheduled.
2. If the student does not serve the rescheduled detention, a parent consultation with the Dean of Student Life and Principal must occur before the student is allowed back in the school building.
3. Detentions will typically take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school.

## DISMISSAL FROM CLASS

If a student demonstrates inappropriate classroom behavior and/or a disrespectful attitude toward the teacher or fellow students, he/she may be dismissed from class, and the teacher will inform the Dean of Student Life or Principal. Infractions will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and disciplinary action is likely to follow.

## DISRESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

Disrespect for teachers, staff, coaches, or others in authority is unacceptable. If a student disrespects an instructor or others in authority and it cannot be resolved peacefully, the instructor should immediately involve the Dean of Student Life or Principal. Disciplinary action and parent consultation are likely to follow.

## DRESS CODE

Students are expected to keep their appearance neat, clean, well-groomed, and remain modestly dressed during the school day and any school-sponsored event. The way students dress and keep their appearance is another way to honor God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20); it helps them keep a good reputation and allows them to represent themselves, their families, and their school well.

### Dress Code Expectations

The Principal and Dean of Student Life will make final decisions regarding dress code violations, including issues not mentioned in the policies below. If necessary, parents will be notified and asked to come to school to pick up their son/daughter or bring proper attire to resolve the issue.

- Student clothing is required to cover a student's personal and private areas, including the midriff, cleavage, and undergarments
- Sleeveless shirts may be worn with straps at least three fingers wide. Under the arm must also be covered
- Pants without rips, frays, or vents/mesh are permitted



- Skirts, dresses, and shorts are to be finger-tip length all the way around
- PJ pants are not permitted
- Dress pants with patterns are permitted
- Students must keep coats in their lockers; a sweater, vest, light jacket, or sweat-shirt may be worn in classrooms that are sometimes chilly
- Students must keep book bags, backpacks, duffel bags, etc. in their lockers
- Students may not wear hats, caps, hoods, or any headgear during the instructional day except with the approval of the Principal or the Dean of Student Life
- Students may not wear headphones and/or AirPods in the classroom or during chapel except with the approval of the instructor
- Students may not wear clothing or accessories contrary to SCLA values and/or biblical principles
- Students may not wear slides or flip-flops
- Students of legal age may have visible tattoos not opposing Christian values
- Visible body piercings are not allowed (exceptions: ears and a small nose stud)

### Dress Down Days

- Hats are permitted except for during chapel.
- PJ pants are permitted
- Slides and flip-flops are permitted

### Dress Code Violations and Enforcement

- First offense/semester: warning
- Second offense/semester: 30-minute detention
- Third offense/semester: 60-minute detention
- Fourth offense/semester: two 60-minute detentions; student sent home for the day; parents must meet with the Dean of Student Life before the student returns to school

## DRUGS/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/VAPING

SCLA students are encouraged to treasure their bodies and to make healthy life choices in keeping with 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

- Using, possessing, distributing, or selling the following products is prohibited:
  - Tobacco and vaping products
  - Alcoholic beverages
  - Illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia
- The possession or use of any kind of illegal drug, tobacco, or alcohol is strictly prohibited while on the SCLA campus or while participating in any school activity
  - Violations of this rule also break the MSHSL code of conduct and will cause a loss of eligibility
  - These rules are in effect for 12 months of the year
  - These rules will be enforced regardless of parental consent
- Civil authorities will be notified as appropriate in the case of any student who possesses or uses illegal substances on school grounds or while participating in school activities, and parents will be notified promptly

- In an effort to ensure that the SCLA campus is free of illegal drugs, a professional K-9 drug search team will perform random inspections on campus and the immediate neighborhoods as needed
  - The Fifth Commandment encourages us to be concerned about the physical welfare of our neighbors and ourselves
  - Drug and alcohol abuse can result in impaired judgment, lack of self-control, and possible permanent addictions and/or injuries to our neighbors or ourselves

## Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco/Vaping Violations and Enforcement

- 1st offense/year: One-day In-School Suspension (ISS); parent consultation meeting with the Dean of Student Life and/or Principal.
- 2nd offense/year: Three-day suspension (two Out-of-School Suspensions, one ISS); parent consultation meeting with the Dean of Student Life and/or Principal; student must adhere to a behavior contract
- 3rd offense/year: Expulsion

## EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

- For snow emergencies and other school closing information, please listen to the local news stations
- If the West St. Paul School District #197 is closed, SCLA will automatically close
- Closings will be listed on the SCLA website and social media as early as possible
- The safety of the students is always the deciding factor; parents make the final decision if their students should drive to school in inclement weather.
- Students will be expected to complete classes via the internet (see the “Virtual School Day” section in this handbook) only after two snow/cold days have been called.

## EMPLOYMENT

While part-time work may be a necessity for some students if they are to attend SCLA, both parents and students should be aware that a student’s priority at this time of his/her life is the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the future. Employment should not come at the expense of academic performance and progress.

## FIRE DRILLS, TORNADO DRILLS, AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

If the school building must be evacuated for any reason, the emergency signal will sound. If this should occur, students will leave their classroom or area quickly and quietly according to the posted routes.

- Students must walk in single file and not run
- Classroom doors should be closed
- The first person through the exit doors should hold open the doors
- Students will remain outside in the designated areas until given further directions
- Special instructions will be given regarding tornado alert and drill procedures
- Any fire should be reported immediately to the nearest faculty member
- Instructions for other disaster procedures will be given by announcement as necessary

Several fire and lock-down drills occur during the school year. An Emergency Action Plan that provides guidelines, structure, and a process for dealing with a range of crisis situations is kept in the school office and in each classroom.

## GAMBLING

Since gambling is an activity that could easily cause moral and spiritual problems for anyone, as an organization entrusted with the spiritual welfare of its students, SCLA does not permit any type of gambling activity on its premises.

## HALL PASS SYSTEM

A hall pass system is used at SCLA so that the instructors may carry out their responsibilities regarding both students and property. Written hall passes issued by teachers must be in the possession of the student when he/she is going to see another teacher or going to study hall.

## HOMEROOM ADVISORS

Each student at SCLA has access to a faculty member assigned to serve him/her as an advisor. These faculty advisors aid students in their academic and personal progress and help their homerooms plan group activities.

The guidance department acts as a resource for students' post-high school lives.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

The Minnesota State Health Department requires that all immunizations be up-to-date, or the student may not attend school.

## INSURANCE

All students, especially those involved in organizational or sports activities at SCLA, should be covered by some type of family accident/health insurance.

- The school's insurance policies do not cover accidental injuries to students
- International students must provide proof of medical insurance to attend SCLA
- Students who participate in co-curricular activities sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) are covered by a catastrophic insurance policy carried through the MSHSL

## LOCKER/VEHICLE/DORM SEARCHES

Lockers and dorm rooms are the property of SCLA. Any individual locker or room at SCLA can be searched by members of the school's administration when there is probable cause. In such cases, parents and students will be notified of the search.

Vehicles on the SCLA campus may also be searched by the school's administration when there is probable cause. In such cases, parents and students will be notified of the search.

## NURSE SERVICES

District 197 provides the services of a school nurse for those students attending SCLA who request such services. Requests for service forms are distributed at the time of registration and must be signed by the parents or guardians of the students.

- The school nurse is on the premises one day per week but is available to consult with school administration during any school day
- No dispensing of medicines, including any over-the-counter medications, can be made from the school office unless permission is obtained from the parent/guardian of the student
- Students who are taking prescription medication while at school must bring the medication to the school office in a pharmacy-labeled prescription bottle labeled with dosage instructions, along with a permission slip from his/her doctor
- Medical consent to administer medication forms, distributed at the time of registration, must also be signed by the parent/guardian and be on file for each student when medication is dispersed
- Students who need to spend time in the nurse's office during the school day must check in and out at the school office
- Time spent in the nurse's office is considered an excused absence from class, but the student will not be allowed to participate in any co-curricular activity that day.

## OUT OF BOUNDS AREAS

For the safety of all students, the following areas are out of bounds before, during, and after school, except for entering and exiting the building:

- All the areas in the back and at the sides of the school, the areas in front of and around the dorms
- All parking lots
- Track/football field, stadium, press box, practice field, tennis courts, baseball field, and softball field except when attending scheduled events or practices
- Dorm students are to follow the guidelines outlined by the dorm staff

## PARKING

- During school hours, students who drive to school should park in the designated spaces of the main parking lot
- Dormitory residents are to park in designated areas
- Students should consider the parking areas as “off limits” during the school day
- Students who drive to school regularly must register all vehicles they drive with the office
  - After registering their vehicle, students will receive a parking permit that must remain in the window of the vehicle
  - Parking on the SCLA lot is a privilege that may be revoked if abused in any way

## PHYSICAL EXAMS

A current physical examination form is to be on file in the school office for all students enrolled at SCLA. Physicals are current for three years from the date of the exam. Athletes participating in any MSHSL activity must adhere to the league rules and requirements concerning physical exams.

## PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Christian standards of living call for appropriate displays of affection, such as holding hands and quick hugs. Anything beyond this is inappropriate in a Christian school setting and may lead to discipline caused by offensive conduct.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

### Homecoming

Homecoming is a major athletic and social event of the fall season. The Student Council arranges the many activities associated with homecoming week and makes all necessary announcements to the student body.

### Snowfest

Snowfest is a social event of the winter season, the dates for which are selected by the Student Council. The Student Council arranges the many activities and makes all necessary announcements to the student body.

### Spring Formal

The Spring Formal is a major social event for juniors and seniors, held near the end of the school year. The junior class and their parents, working in conjunction with class advisors, arrange the decorations and activities associated with this event.

### Other Activities

Various other activities are sponsored by the Student Council, as well as by other clubs, classes, and organizations, for the enjoyment of the student body and the development of Christian fellowship. These are announced during the school year either in daily announcements, newsletters to parents, and/or by posters in the hallways.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Students are reminded to use the many forms of social media in a God-pleasing, caring, and respectful manner.

- Posting confidential information, derogatory, discriminatory, negative, or sexist messages or photos on social networks, (i.e. Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) is harmful to individual and group reputations and uncharacteristic of God's children
- Students will not publicly criticize teachers, other students, or SCLA
- While at school, students will not take or post images of any student, teacher, or staff member without their expressed consent
  - An exemption is granted for a public performance (sports, play, concert, etc.)
- Student misconduct through these media outlets will be dealt with on an individual basis and may include disciplinary action
  - Misuse of social media may impact a student's ability to represent SCLA or participate in various activities or groups

## TRIPS AND TOURS

All school-sanctioned trips and tours are planned by and are under the direction of a faculty advisor. Except for some field trips in conjunction with classes, these trips and tours are at the expense of the students. Leadership and conduct will be considered when choosing students to participate.

## VISITORS

- All visitors must check in at the school office to receive a visitor pass
- Students who wish to bring a visitor to school must receive permission from the Principal at least one day in advance
- Each student is limited to two visits per school year

## WEAPONS POLICY

SCLA does not allow the possession of firearms or other weapons on the premises or while participating in school activities. Students who possess weapons or firearms in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action. Students should immediately notify the Dean of Student Life or Principal of any violation of this policy.

# STUDENT RIGHTS

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### 2017 MN Statutes 121A.031 SCHOOL STUDENT BULLYING POLICY

“Bullying” means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:

- (1) there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or
- (2) materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

(f) “Cyberbullying” means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including but not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet Web site or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.

(g) Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct may involve, but is not limited to, conduct that causes physical harm to a student or a student’s property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property; under Minnesota common law, violates a student’s reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student; is directed at any student or students, including those based on a person’s actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, academic status related to student performance, disability, or status with regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristic defined in chapter 363A.

## Procedures

1. Incidents of bullying should be reported to the staff.
2. The staff will record details and share with the Dean of Student Life or Principal as soon as possible.
3. The Dean of Student Life will inform parents of all involved of the incident.
4. In serious cases parents may be asked to meet the Dean of Student and/or Principal to discuss the matter concerning their child.
5. If necessary and appropriate, local police will be consulted.
6. If the bullying behavior does not stop immediately, the result may be suspension or expulsion.

## DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS

Violation of SCLA’s discrimination or harassment policies may result in disciplinary action including detention, revocation of privileges, or dismissal.

Students who believe they have not been provided equal opportunity in any manner, or if they become aware of discrimination or harassment, should immediately report the conduct to the Dean of Student Life or the Principal. St. Croix Lutheran Academy will



promptly investigate and attempt to resolve concerns. A student's identity will be kept confidential to the extent possible under the circumstances.

If the concerns are not handled to the satisfaction of the complainant, the matter should be reported to the Board of Regents.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND DUE PROCESS

During a school year there will be unavoidable disagreements. In those cases, the following process is in place to deal with concerns and appeals.

### Concerns and Suggestions

Effective communication is essential in maintaining a healthy and productive school environment. Open and candid discussion among students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration is encouraged. St. Croix Lutheran Academy welcomes ideas and observations for improving the school. Suggestions should be made to the Dean of Academics, Dean of Student Life, or a Principal.

Situations may arise where students or parents have concerns. The easiest way to resolve most concerns is through open and candid discussion with the individuals involved. If such discussion does not resolve the situation, students and parents should speak to to the Dean of Academics, Dean of Student Life, or a Principal. If a concern is not addressed satisfactorily, the matter should be referred to the Board of Regents.

### Academic Concerns

When parents are concerned about their student's progress in a class, the following procedure/steps should be followed:

1. Contact the teacher by phone or email.
2. Plan a teacher/parent/student meeting.
3. After steps 1 and 2 are complete (if further issues need to be addressed) contact the student's advisor who will provide an advisor consultation form and schedule an advisor/teacher/parent/student meeting.
4. After steps 1-3 are completed and issues continue to be unresolved, please contact the Principal or Dean of Academics.

### Appeals

Academic decisions based on attendance, eligibility, and semester grade adjustments can be appealed based on the guidelines found under academics.

### Discipline Appeals

1. Suspension – The suspension of a student is not subject to appeal. However, the length of a suspension can be appealed. In such cases:
  - a. An appeal of the length of suspension with clear points explaining the basis of the appeal should be sent to the appropriate Principal.
  - b. An appeal committee will speak with appropriate parties and consider the merits of the appeal.
  - c. A decision on the appeal will be made within 36 hours of receiving the appeal.
  - d. If the appeal is denied, the decision may be appealed to the Education and Program Committee of the Board of Regents. Their decision will be rendered as final.

2. Expulsion – An expulsion of a student is subject to appeal. During the appeal process, the student will be under suspension. In such cases:
  - a. An appeal of the expulsion with clear points explaining the basis of the appeal should be sent to the appropriate Principal.
  - b. The appeal committee will schedule a meeting with parent(s) to discuss the appeal and the reasons for the appeal. (If parents are not available to meet face-to-face, a Skype or Google Hangout meeting will be scheduled)
  - c. The committee will speak with all appropriate parties and consider the merits of the appeal.
  - d. A decision on the appeal will be made within two (2) days of the parent meeting.
  - e. If the appeal is denied, the decision may be appealed to the Education and Program Committee of the Board of Regents. Their decision will be rendered as final.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

St. Croix Lutheran Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in its administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## RETALIATION PROHIBITED

SCLA will not tolerate retaliation against a student or parent who brings a good faith report of discrimination or harassment. If retaliation has occurred or is suspected, the matter should be brought promptly to the attention of the Dean of Student Life or the Principal. If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the concern should be reported to the Board of Regents.

All students and parents are expected to be cooperative and forthright in responding to any report of discrimination or harassment.

## OFFENSIVE CONDUCT

St. Croix Lutheran Academy promotes a Christian environment in which all students are comfortable and can work productively. Offensive, degrading, or harassing remarks or conduct will not be tolerated, even if the conduct does not rise to the level of unlawful discrimination or harassment. Conduct prohibited by this policy includes any action by any student, faculty, staff, or member of administration that directly or indirectly threatens unwelcome physical contact, or offensive conduct that threatens or adversely affects a student's performance or participation in school activities.



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